

April 5, 2020

KIBC Sunday Worship Service

Message by Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message : “Hosanna! Blessed Is He!”

— Jesus’ Triumphal Entry Into Jerusalem —

Text: John 12:12~19

2:12 The next day the great crowd that had come for the festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem.

12:13 They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting,

“Hosanna!

“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

“Blessed is the king of Israel!

12:14 Jesus found a young donkey and sat on it, as it is written:

12:15 “Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey’s colt.

12:16 At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that these things had been done to him.

12:17 Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word.

12:18 Many people, because they had heard that he had performed this sign, went out to meet him.

12:19 So the Pharisees said to one another, “See, this is getting us nowhere. Look how the whole world has gone after him!

Introduction

Passover, one of the three big Jewish feasts begins this Thursday. It is the important feast for Jewish people to remember how their ancestors, who were slaves in Egypt, left Egypt by God’s leading.

This Friday is the Passion Day. It is the day that Jesus suffered on the cross. We have **the Passion Worship Service** this Friday evening at KIBC.

We celebrate Easter next Sunday (April 12th). It is the day that Jesus defeated death and rose from the dead. Only God can defeat death. Therefore, we celebrate Easter and give thanks to Him.

My friends, there is no Easter without the passion of Jesus Christ. Therefore, this is a very important week for us.

By the way, today is called **Palm Sunday**. Jesus Christ entered into Jerusalem on a donkey's colt. The Bible records as below—

12:12 The next day the great crowd that had come for the festival heard that Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem.

12:13 They took palm branches and went out to meet him, shouting,

“Hosanna!

“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

Blessed is the king of Israel!

The crowd came to meet Jesus shouting, **“Hosanna”**. **Hosanna means “please save us now” in Hebrew**. People took palm branches to meet Jesus. It is called **Palm Sunday**.

Why did He enter into Jerusalem? **Why** did the crowd hail him? I would like to study these **questions** according to the following 4 points.

Main Points

1 . Why Did Jesus Enter Jerusalem?

1) Jesus' Work

There was a **rumor** about Jesus at that time. Jesus preached and healed the sick in the region of Galilee. He even did miracles to raise the dead.

John writes about Lazarus in Chapter 12, who had been risen from the dead by Jesus.

Verse 9 records as below—

12:9 Meanwhile a large crowd of Jews found out that Jesus was there and came, not only because of him but also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead.

Some people must have hoped to only have a look at him. They wanted to be healed and blessed, if they could. John, Chapter 12 records that the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus, because many Jewish people followed him, left Judaism, and began to believe Jesus.

It was at that time Jesus and his twelve disciples were going up to Jerusalem. It was on the day of Nissan 10.

2) The Day of Nissan 10th

The day that Jesus entered in Jerusalem was the day of Nissan 10th on the Jewish calendar.

It has a very significant meaning, because at that day they chose **lambs** which were slaughtered on **the Passover**. The lambs were examined until Nissan 14th.

Exodus records about the Passover in Chapter 12 as below—

12:2 “This month is to be for you the first month, the first month of your year.

12:3 Tell the whole community of Israel that on the tenth day of this month each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household.

12:4 If any household is too small for a whole lamb, they must share one with their nearest neighbor, having taken into account the number of people there are. You are to determine the amount of lamb needed in accordance with what each person will eat.

12:5 The animals you choose must be year-old males without defect, and you may take them from the sheep or the goats

12:6 Take care of them until the fourteenth day of the month, when all the members of the community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight.

Jesus entered Jerusalem on the day of Nissan 10th. It means that Jesus was chosen as **a lamb of the Passover**. The festival in the days of the Old Testament had its meaning. **Palm Sunday** was the very moment that the prophecy was fulfilled.

3) Jesus Christ the Lamb of the Passover

Jewish people had always slaughtered lambs on commemorating the Passover. On top of that, the lambs must have been a year-old male. Jesus Christ was the true lamb of the Passover that was slaughtered on the Passover.

Therefore, he needed to enter Jerusalem on **the Passover** and also the day of Nissan 10th. Jesus was without blemish or any defect. It was God’s amazing plan.

John the Baptist said, who was the prophet said,

John 1:29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

- My dear friends, **the time of Jesus** has come. His entry into Jerusalem and the beginning of the Passion Week.

2. Why Did Jesus Enter Jerusalem Riding on A Donkey's Colt?

1) He Who Seats on A Donkey's Colt

12:15 "Do not be afraid, Daughter Zion; see, your king is coming, seated on a donkey's colt.

Zechariah 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

Why did Zechariah say, "**Rejoice greatly**"?

The Scripture above records many key words. And, the sign of a king was **riding on a donkey's colt**.

A Donkey:

- ① **Donkeys were domestic animals used for carrying loads. While horses were active animals and were used for war, donkeys were slow in action.**
- ② **Donkeys were yoked and put to work in a field.**
- ③ **Donkeys were not typically used for a high person to ride on. They say donkeys were used for agricultural work.**

* Riding on the **donkey** means that He is **humble** and suitable to be the Prince of Peace.

The Bible tells us, "**Do not be afraid**" in John 12:15. What a blessing encouragement God has given to us! Kings in those days were almost like dictators today. When king Herod, for example, came to know the Jesus was born, he gave orders to kill all the boys who were two years old and under.

Matthew 2:16 When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under.

Therefore, people feared kings. However, Jesus, the Prince of Peace is different. God says,

“Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem!”

As Zion is a hill in Jerusalem, they are the same place.

2) The Sign of the King

My friends. Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.

12:17 Now the crowd that was with him when he called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to spread the word.

12:18 Many people, because they had heard that he had performed this sign, went out to meet him. “Sign” (*semeion* in Greek)

⇒ **The sign** is a spiritual marker of God’s great testimony. It is God’s finger.

The Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus for **a sign**.

Mark 8:11 The Pharisees came and began to question Jesus. To test him, they asked him for a sign from heaven.

People in the region of Galilee saw Jesus who did a miracle (a sign) that fed about five thousand of men with the five loaves and the two fish. People in Judea and Jerusalem saw Jesus who raised a man from the dead. These were the signs for them, and Jesus was the king for them.

To accept the sign means to have **faith**.

Jesus said as below—

John 10:38 But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father.

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, He really sat on **a donkey’s colt** as Zechariah had prophesied. The Savior of the world didn’t appear on a white horse from a palace. He was from Nazareth; “Can anything good come from there?” That was God’s **sign** (*semeion*), by which people over the world receive God’s grace. How thankful!

● Like this, He who is **the King of the Israelites** is the righteous (just) One and came to give **salvation** and is **gentle (humble)**. And His sign was **riding on a colt**.

3. Why Was Jesus Hailed by the Crowd Shouting “Hosanna!”?

When the crowd met Jesus, they shouted,

12:13 “Hosanna!

“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

“Blessed is the king of Israel!

This is prophecy in Psalm 118, Verse 26.

118:26 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. From the house of the Lord we bless you.

“He who comes in the name of the Lord” It was the word when they met the Messiah at that time. The Israelites were longing for their king, the Savior. They were waiting for the king who could save their nation and reconstruct it. Therefore, they shouted, **“Hosanna! (Save us now!).”** This was their real shouting wish.

They probably shouted this not remembering Psalm 118. However, they received Jesus the king of Israel. Jesus also faithfully followed the saving plan of God the Father. Jesus himself had conviction that he was the lamb of **the Passover**. He was really faithful to the Father.

● “Hosanna” was a long-expected word of the Israelites.

4. Why Was Jesus Hailed with the Branches of Palm Trees?

The crowd took **the branches of palm trees** and welcomed Jesus. There are many **palm trees** in Israel still now.

1) The Branches of Palm Trees

Palm trees: *phoenix* (Greek) date trees

- ① **The shape of leaves like bird’s feathers.**
- ③ **It bears plenty of fruit. Dried fruit is used as preservatives.**
- ④ **They made wreaths with its branches and used for festival occasions.**

A certain book records that the Israelites took **the branches of palm trees** to celebrate national festivities since approximately the second century B.C.

When Jesus entered into Jerusalem, the crowd welcomed Him with **the branches of palm trees**. It means that Jesus was the one to save Israel.

2) Feast of Tabernacles

There is another important reason for taking **branches of the palm trees**. This was the custom of **Feast of Tabernacles**, not of **Passover**.

Feast of Tabernacles is the festival celebrated on the 15th day of the month of Tishrei (September to October of today). It lasts 7 days and they have special prayer service on the first and final day of the week. This is the thanksgiving festival for the end of the gathering of the harvest. The festival also commemorates the days when the Israelites traveled in the desert.

People make booths made with branches and live in them for seven days. Jewish people still observe **Feast of Tabernacles** today. They celebrate the feast in a booth made of tree branches. (Leviticus 23:39-43, Numbers 29:12-38)

The crowd shouted "Hosanna!". This is the prayer of the Feast of Tabernacles. **"Hosanna!" which means, "Save us now!"**

They believed and expected that Jesus would establish the Kingdom of God (the Messianic Kingdom). However, the important point is that **the Passover** (Jesus' death on the cross) must precede the Feast of Tabernacles (the end of the gathering of the harvest).

© Today we have the Palm Sunday. Then, what do we learn on this day?

⇒ **We learn the credibility of the Bible.**

The Messiah the Old Testament points to Jesus Christ.

The Bible : The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever. (Isaiah 40:8)

The Bible is worthy to believe. The crowd gave Jesus a big welcome on **Palm Sunday**. However, even His disciples didn't understand its true meaning.

12:16 At first his disciples did not understand all this. Only after Jesus was glorified did they realize that these things had been written about him and that these things had been done to him.

Human beings usually see only what they want to see. What did the people expect... what did the disciples expect? Where was their heart? The crowd who expected the earthly king left Jesus that same week. What did they see? They realized the true meaning only after His Resurrection and Pentecost (See Acts Chapter 2)

My dear friends, we look back on the fact in the past. What do we see?

Conclusion

Title of the Message : “Hosanna! Blessed Is He!”

— Jesus’ Triumphal Entry Into Jerusalem —

It is Palm Sunday today. What response do we make to the God of the Bible?

The response of the Israelites⇒ they welcomed Jesus by shouting “**Hosanna! Blessed is he!**”

Why did the crowd welcome Jesus? Four points.

1. They welcomed Jesus’ triumphal entry to Jerusalem.

It was just before **the Passover** and the beginning of the Passion Week. Jesus was the Lamb of God, who must be slaughtered at **the Passover**. ⇒ **The time of Jesus** had come. (Exodus Chapter 12)

2. They welcomed Jesus riding on a donkey’s colt.

He, who is the king of Israel, is righteous, having salvation and gentle (humble).

His sign is **riding on a colt**. (Zechariah Chapter 9)

3. They welcomed Jesus shouting “Hosanna! Blessed is he!”

The Israelites were longing for the Messiah for a long time. (Psalm 118)

4. They welcomed Jesus by laying down “the branches of palm trees”

It foretold the Son of God. Jesus is the King of the Kingdom of God. (Zechariah Chapter 14)

* God Bless You!